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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Immediate Release

CONVICTIONS FOR WILDLIFE LAW VIOLATIONS SHOW INCREASE

The greatest number of convictions for game law violations ever reported for any one year by game management agents of the Fish and Wildlife Service was announced today by Secretary of the Interior Douglas McKay.

A record total of 6,225 convictions during fiscal year 1953 reveals an increase of 1,296 over the 4,929 convictions reported for fiscal year 1952. Fines and costs collected amounted to \$188,385, as against \$155,261 last year. Jail sentences imposed totaled 268 days, as compared with 306 last year.

Federal court action in Migratory Bird Treaty Act violations resulted in 524 convictions. Fines and costs of \$22,766 were imposed. Jail sentences totaled 75 days, and jail sentences of 4,570 days were suspended.

Under the Migratory Bird Conservation Act, 59 convictions were obtained, fines and costs of \$1,953 were imposed, and jail sentences of 210 days were suspended.

Cases involving the Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act resulted in 51 convictions, \$1,425 in fines, and 240 days of suspended jail sentences.

Other cases successfully concluded in Federal courts concerned violations of the Bald Eagle Act and the statute relating to the illegal interstate shipment of black bass and other fish.

Cooperative effort on the part of State and Federal game law enforcement personnel resulted in 5,584 convictions, \$161,511 in fines and costs, and imposed jail sentences amounting to 134 days.

The increase in apprehensions and convictions, over previous years, is due chiefly to the activities of a larger Fish and Wildlife Service enforcement staff. The expansion was made possible by congressional action which authorized an increase from 10 percent to 15 percent in expenditure of Federal "duck stamp" funds for law enforcement. Since Public Law 182 authorizing the increase was passed late in 1951 twenty-one game management agents have been added to the force. As a result, the over-all effectiveness of the enforcement program has benefited proportionately.

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